

NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Increased Number of Visitors

Changes in Effect at Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area

OCOTILLO WELLS – Several changes have been made at the popular Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area due to an increase in the number of visitors, California State Park officials announced today.

“We hope you have a fun and safe visit to Ocotillo Wells this season,” said Superintendent Kathy Dolinar. “We are asking for our visitors help in continuing to meet our mission. By helping, you ensure future generations will be able to experience the same quality of off-road recreation experience that you currently enjoy.” Dolinar noted that there has been a more than 80 percent increase in visitation since 2001.

The following changes have been instituted, Dolinar said, and visitors should remember to follow them when visiting the park:

Public Safety

- Due to the high number of incidents on Blow Sand Hill last season, park officials will begin focused patrols in the area from October 31 through January 1, 2005 aimed at curbing illegal activity in that area. Depending on the data that is received and the results of the focused patrols, the area could be closed on holiday weekend nights between January 14 and May 31.
- Under the California Code of Regulations section on camping, the curfew for juveniles under age 18 is 10 p.m. After 10 p.m. juveniles may be in the park only if they are camped in legally designated areas with a parent, guardian or have a permission slip.

Clean Up

- Glass containers will no longer be allowed on trails. However, visitors may continue to use glass bottles in camping areas. All visitors are encouraged to pack out what you carry in or place empty glass and cans in recycling bins located in the main camping areas and at the dump station.

Education

- Visitors to the park will find maps, rules and regulations, as well as information about park resources and programs at the display shelters at the main access points to the park. In addition, the website has been updated. .
- A self-guided interpretive route is available to educate visitors about the amazing facts and features of Ocotillo Wells. Evening programs are also conducted throughout the park. Visitors can find a schedule of these events and other park activities at the new display cases outside each restroom.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA is located adjacent to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. This area has more than 83,000 acres of desert terrain, stretching from below sea level to 400 foot elevations. It is a motorcycle, four-wheel drive, all-terrain vehicle, and dune buggy use area.

Access is via Highway 78, about 35 miles east of Julian or about 20 miles west of Highway 86.

For additional information on Ocotillo Wells SVRA, visit the State Parks website at www.parks.ca.gov

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